

September 16, 2013

Commission's Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission

Reference: WC Docket No. 13-184
Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) for E-Rate Modernization

I am writing to provide comments to the FCC on the E-Rate NPRM, proceeding **13-184**. Our system, Homewood City School District, has been involved with the E-Rate program since its inception. The program has provided funds to our district for telephone/cell phone service, email service and wide-area Internet service. This program has allowed us to provide needed services to our district and the resources that have been delivered through this initiative have been greatly appreciated by all our users. However, the cost for broadband services necessary to enhance bandwidth has continued to escalate with the increasing needs of students and faculty to access online resources for research, collaboration and communication. E-Rate funding has not kept pace with this need.

As the Director of Technology and former classroom teacher, I know the importance of seamless digital learning throughout the curriculum. The E-Rate program has been a driving force to ensure that nearly all students and teachers-regardless of their socioeconomic circumstances-gain access to online resources. Online resources have become a vital part of every classroom. Today teachers use online resources to: access web-based digital textbooks with supplementary materials for students; access web-based learning management systems for learning communities that include both students and faculty; access web-based assessment software that provide benchmark data on student progress and, when necessary, provide intervention techniques; and access web-based Credit Recovery software to increase student successful in completion of high school graduation. Also, state mandated assessments and Common Core assessments are compelling needs for a high speed reliable network. I see these requirements only increasing in the future.

The E-Rate funding has been a huge success in bringing Internet access to almost every classroom in America. I understand that in the last funding cycle applications from schools and libraries totaled more than \$5 billion. This was more than double the available funding. I respectfully urge the FCC to increase funding to help meet the demands of the program. In this day and time and with increased global pressures, all students need access to high speed broadband. Your attention to this vital need is greatly appreciated.

Thanks,

Tamalyn C. Butcke
Director of Technology
Homewood City School District